

BUYING RUBIES IN BURMA.

A Peculiar Method of Bargaining For the Precious Stones.

The peculiar business methods of oriental merchants are illustrated by the manner of buying rubies in Burma. In the examination of rubies artificial light is not used, the merchants holding that full sunlight alone can bring out the color and brilliancy of the gems. Sales must therefore take place between 9 a. m. and 3 p. m., and the sky must be clear.

The purchaser, placed near a window, has before him a large copper plate. The sellers come to him one by one, and each empties upon this plate his little bag of rubies. The purchaser proceeds to arrange them for valuation in a number of small heaps. The first division is into three grades, according to size. Each of these groups is again divided into three piles, according to color, and each of these piles in turn is again divided into three groups, according to shape. The bright copper plate has a curious use. The sunlight reflected from it through the stones brings out with true rubies a color effect different from that with red spinels and tourmalines, which are thus easily separated.

The buyer and seller then go through a very peculiar method of bargaining by signs, or, rather, grips, in perfect silence. After agreeing upon the fairness of the classification they join their right hands, covered with a handkerchief or the flap of a garment, and by grips and pressures mutually understood among all these dealers they make, modify and accept proposals of purchase and sale. The hands are then uncovered and the prices are recorded. —Jewelers' Circular-Weekly.

JAPANESE PROVERBS.

They Are More Picturesque In Language Than Ours.

"Roses have thorns" and "Walls have ears" are as common in the Japanese speech as in our own. We say "More haste, less speed," but the Japanese phrase is "If in a hurry go round." In this country we very often remark that "accidents will happen in the best regulated families." The Japs, on the other hand, with an eye to the picturesque, vitalize it, so to speak, in their "Even a monkey sometimes falls from a tree." One of our useful English sayings is "Those who play with edged tools must expect to cut their fingers." In expressing a similar thought the Jap goes us one better so far as picturesqueness is concerned. He says, "If you keep tigers you are likely to have trouble." One of our standard maxims is to the effect that "oil and water won't mix." The Japs have not improved on this. "You can't rivet a nail in a custard" is their way of putting it. "The lotus springs from the mud" is their poetical expression of the common thought that "out of evil good may come."

What could be more suggestive and at the same time so poetic as their "Scattering a fog with a fan?" When a Jap undertakes the impossible his neighbors do not scoff at him or mock him. They simply say that he is "building bridges to the clouds" or that he is "dipping up the ocean with a shell." Failure in such a country must be as delightful as success in our more material land. "Thine own heart makes the world" is worthy of Emerson or Browning. —Rochester Post-Express.

The Defiant Drummer.

"It was right funny," said Uncle Hosea, telling of the orchestral concert. "A smart Aleck lookin' feller set in the middle, an' all ter once the little man at the end o' the line hit the big drum a sassy rap. Well, the smart Aleck feller shakes a little stick at the drummer, an' what does he do but hit her up ag'in jest ter show he was as good as the next man. An', by Jinks, he didn't take no back talk—or, rather, no orders—from the smart Aleck man, because he just kept a-whackin' that big drum in spite o' the boss' a-shakin' that stick, as if ter say he'd catch it if he didn't quit. Yer, sir; I glori'd in his spunk, if he was little. An' at the end o' the tune he whooped it up on that drum harder than ever. A little man for nerve every time."

Right and Left Handed.

It is curious to notice the vagaries of humanity in cases where no hard and fast line has been already drawn. Although most right handed persons put on their coats left arm first, a considerable percentage thrust in the right first. Soldiers are from the right shoulder, but sportsmen are found who prefer the left. In working with a spade a proportion of right handed men grasp the spade with the left hand and push with the left foot and right hand, though when using an ax the same individuals would grasp farthest down with the right. —Chambers' Journal.

A Korean Custom.

In some parts of Korea, and among some Korean families, it is the custom for bridegrooms to dwell under the roofs of their fathers-in-law until the first son has been born and attained to years of manhood. Should any Korean, however, stay in the house of his bride's people for more than three days after his wedding, he is compelled to remain for an entire year.

Too Violent an Innovation.

"You told me you had an original idea in your novel." "I had," was the reply, "but the publisher discovered it in the proof sheets and made me take it out." —Washington Star.

When a man marries in some other church everybody wonders whether he will go with his wife or she with him. —Washington (D. C.) Democrat.

Lloyd Garee, a student at the University, was in town Sunday.

A DELIBERATE MAN.

He Ate His Fall Dinner and Caught the Stage as Well.

Charles Stuart, one time senator from Michigan, was traveling by stage through his own state. The weather was bitterly cold, the snow deep, the roads practically unbroken. The stage was nearly one hour late at the dinner station, everybody was more or less cross and in a hurry and the situation uncomfortable to the last degree.

Senator Stuart sat down to his dinner with his usual deliberation, notwithstanding the word that was passed around, "Fifteen minutes for refreshments."

When he had finished his first cup of coffee the passengers were leaving the table. By the time the second cup arrived the stage was at the door. "All aboard!" shouted the driver. The senator lingered and called for a third cup of coffee. The crowd laughed and flung back chaff at the deliberate man at the table.

While the household, as was the custom, assembled at the door to see the stage drive away, the senator continued calmly drinking his coffee. Suddenly, just as the stage started, there was a violent pounding on the dining room table, and the landlord hurried in, to find that the senator wanted a dish of rice pudding. When it came he called for a spoon, but there wasn't a spoon to be found.

"That shock headed fellow took 'em; I thought he was a crook!" exclaimed the landlady.

The landlord jumped at the same conclusion.

"Hurry after that stage; bring 'em all back!" he shouted to the sheriff, who was untying his horse from the rail in front of the tavern.

A few minutes later the stage, in charge of the sheriff, swung around in front of the house. The driver was in a fury.

"Search them passengers!" yelled the landlord.

But before the officer could move the senator opened the stage door, stepped inside, then leaned out, touched the sheriff's arm and whispered:

"Tell the landlord he'll find his spoons in the coffee-pot." —Boston Post.

WISDOM OF NOVELISTS.

There is no man so cautious about money as your reformed spendthrift. —G. B. Burgin.

Men who stand much upon their dignity have not, as a rule, much else to stand upon. —Seton Merriman.

The virtues of our loved ones we admire. Their failings we would forget. But over their follies we love to linger smiling. —Jerome K. Jerome.

Any fool can get a notion. It needs training to drive a thing through—training and conviction, not rushing after the first fancy. —Rudyard Kipling.

Sometimes a chance remark, which has very little significance for the person who makes it, is like an aperture that lets in light on the whole character. —Sarah Grand.

Superstition, in its essence, is merely a recognition of the truth that in a universe of mysteries and contradictions, like ours, nothing conceivable or inconceivable is impossible. —Henry Harland.

The Judge's Advantage.

One of the best stories of Judge Parry, a famous English jurist, related to a feeble looking man who was rebuked for supporting a ridiculous claim made by his wife. "I tell you candidly, I don't believe a word of your wife's story," said Judge Parry.

"Yer may do as yer like," replied the man mournfully, "but I've got to."

It was once the doubtful privilege of Judge Parry to overhear the comments of two men against whom he had decided. "E's a fool, but 'e did 'is best," was the verdict of these disappointed suitors. "One might sleep under an unkindly epitaph," was the philosophic comment of the judge.

Ventilation Through the Walls.

The fact is that considerable ventilation is capable of taking place and quite a large exchange of fresh for bad air is effected through the walls of buildings. Many a room that is notoriously stuffy could doubtless be made pleasant to live in by removing the solid paper or impervious coat of paint from the wall and substituting porous paper, or, better still, giving up paper altogether and using a distemper wash of pleasing tone. —London Lancet.

What She Lacked.

A superintendent of a Sunday school relates the following true incident:

The title of the lesson was "The rich young man" and the golden text "One thing thou lackest." A lady teacher in the primary class asked a little tot to repeat the two, and, looking earnestly in the teacher's face, the child unblushingly told her, "One thing thou lackest—a rich young man."

Just Looking.

"Did you say your husband was out looking for work?"

"No. I believe he's out looking at work. There are some men digging a cellar down at the corner, and he doesn't seem able to get any farther." —Philadelphia Press.

Too Easily Met.

Gunner—Yes, sir; I have an awful hard time meeting expenses. Guyer—Wish I could say the same. I meet them altogether too easily—never get out of sight of them, in fact. —Philadelphia Record.

No matter how bright and sunshiny the day, it will appear dark and gloomy to the man who looks at everything "through blue glasses." —Maxwell's Talisman.

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HOW TO LIVE LONG.

Eat Sparingly and as Life Wanes Eat Still More Sparingly.

That most men dig their graves with their teeth has seldom been pointed out more forcibly than is done in the Century in an article by Roger S. Tracy, entitled "How to Live Long." The three-score and ten limit to human life is pronounced a fallacy. Death from old age, occurring at seventy-five or eighty, is a misnomer. Comparative physiologists, we are told, have set the natural years of man at 100, even sometimes at 120, and the reason why the overwhelming majority fall short of normal life is comprised in one sentence—we all eat too much. He, then, who would live to be old, retaining sight, hearing and some digestion, not relinquishing the power of healthy enjoyment, has but to follow a simple rule. Eat sparingly. Refrain from clogging the system by an oversupply of food. Never entirely satisfy the appetite, and make it a habit occasionally to omit a meal or two altogether.

"If I were to assign any one thing as especially conducive to long life from a study of the habits of centenarians, it would be semistarvation," says one authority quoted, and the example is cited of one Luigi Cornaro, who, having lived the pace that kills, amended his ways when death threatened and so reorganized his enfeebled body by a life of temperance and restraint that he lived to be 100, although the doctors had given him up at forty. In middle life, from thirty-five to forty-five, according to Dr. Tracy, there comes a waning of the powers. The effects of overindulgence in eating or drinking are no longer vigorously thrown off as in youth. If the fact is not recognized and the same habits are kept up as heretofore, there is trouble ahead. But if the individual adopts a new regimen of diet, diminishes his meals and regulates his existence as becomes his soberer years a sort of rejuvenation follows, and if at the second climacteric, occurring somewhere between sixty and seventy, there is a further pull up in the food supply, regulated by the slackening powers of assimilation, a hale old age is extremely likely to ensue.

HEALTH RULES.

A clean and cheerful house makes a happy home.

Rise early, retire early and fill your day with work.

Frugality and sobriety form the best elixir of longevity.

Cleanliness prevents rust; the best cared for machines last the longest.

Water and bread maintain life; pure air and sunshine are indispensable to health.

Enough sleep repairs waste and strengthens; too much sleep softens and enfeebles.

Cheerfulness makes love of life, and love of life is half of health. On the contrary, sadness and discouragement hasten old age.

The mind is refreshed and invigorated by distractions and amusement, but abuse of them leads to dissipation and dissipation to vice.

To be sensibly dressed is to give freedom to one's movements and enough warmth to be protected from sudden changes of temperature.

His Self Sacrificing Disposition.

"There isn't anything my boy William won't do to oblige a friend if he likes him," Mrs. Hockafus was saying. "We had a leg of lamb the other day for dinner, and Willie ate till I thought he'd burst, but when he went out to play ten minutes afterward a neighbor's boy told him they were going to have roast goose for dinner at their house and asked him to go and eat with him. Willie didn't want to be uncivil, so he went along, and just as sure as I'm sitting here he pretended he was hungry and ate more of that roast goose than the other boy did!" —Chicago Tribune.

Easy Going Butcher.

The Kansas City Journal tells of a Kansas man who went to a rural butcher shop in Kentucky to order a porterhouse steak. "I have just started in on this beef," said the butcher, "and I won't be down to the porterhouse until about 2 o'clock." His method was to lay half a beef on his block and begin at one end and cut along until it was gone, serving his customers with pieces all the way from the hoof to the neck regardless of their preferences.

No Perfect Health.

Sir Michael Foster in a lecture on "Health and Ill Health" to the members of the Workmen's club said that health, like happiness, did not exist. They had a goal, or limit, and, while seeming attainable, eluded perfect possession. The body consisted of a number of mechanisms which had the closest and most exact relations. As they approximated to harmony there was health, but when discord came, ill health. —London Telegraph.

Walked It Off.

"I'm sorry, Mrs. O'Toole, to hear that yer husband suffers from insomnia. My husband had the same complaint, but he cured it."

"How did he, now?" "Sure, he became a night watchman!" —Brooklyn Life.

Sarcasm.

"Are you the waiter who took my order for that chop?"

"Yes, sir." "Bless me, how you have grown!" —Chicago Journal.

His Intended.

Husband—Does Jack know Miss Peppertree? Wife (calmly)—I believe not, for he has asked her to marry him. —Town and Country.

Read the West Virginian. It has the latest news.

THE PARACHUTE MAN.

His Feelings as He Soared Skyward and Plunged to Earth.

"Come on! The band's all ready!" I was met with a roar of applause as I ran down the hotel steps. The band blared in salute and the crowd opened up for me as I hastened. The parachute was stretched out from the straining balloon. As the man with me snapped the hooks on the ring he showed me where the rope hung and told me how to pull it when cutting loose. He was the excited one. I was in a semistupor. A bitter indifference filled me as I looked at the ugly swaying monster which was to bear me to audience or death.

"Let her go!" With a cleaving of the air and a rush of sound like the coming of a cyclone the balloon shot upward. I ran for the bar, grasped it and soared.

I tried to swing up on the bar, but the rush of the ascent straightened me like an iron rod. I thought my arms would be pulled out. A sickness came over me, comparable to the effect of the start made by a high speed elevator. Then the motion became more easy and I swung up on the bar. I was accustomed to gazing down from heights and I felt no fear as I stared at the falling crowd. I could see them waving hats and hands; could hear the pleasant dreamy sensation and of a steady, easy rising from the ground. I ventured to bend a "crab" and make a few "ankle drops." It was as easy as when I was only a few feet from the ground. I glanced down again. The crowd appeared smaller and seemed to be walking away from me. I had commenced to drift. Now was the time to cut loose. I wished that I might stay where I was—taking chances with that limp bag of a parachute did not look safe. But it had to be done.

I caught hold of the rope, braced myself on the bar and gave a short, hard pull.

Whish—my breath left me! For the first time fear—deadly fear—entered my heart. A jerk that nearly unseated me, and I was again sailing pleasantly through space.

I ventured to essay a few additional feats, as the ground seemed to more closely approach me, and then I commenced to calculate as to the manner in which to strike the ground. Like many other problems, it settled itself. I struck it feet first in a cornfield, was dragged along and scratched up and came to consciousness in the arms of my new manager, who was alternately cursing me for getting killed and blessing me for having saved his skin and the \$450.—Outing.

Economy.

"You've cut down my allowance," she said.

"Yes," he admitted. "I've been spending most of my time at the club recently, and I can't pay board in two places."

"Then you'd better stay home," she said, and he did. But presently there was the old complaint.

"You've cut down my allowance again," she said.

"Yes," he admitted. "I'm spending my time at home now, and my company ought to count for something."

Then she didn't know whether to advise him to go back to the club or not. —Chicago Post.

Reading His Own Works.

I only once heard Thackeray allude to his works and that in a serio-comic spirit, which amused both him and us. "I was traveling on the Rhine," he said (in company no doubt with "the Kieckheburys"), "and entering one of the hotels on the banks, exhausted and weary, I went into the saloon and threw myself on a sofa. There was a book on a little table close by, and I opened it to find it was 'Vanity Fair.' I had not seen it since I corrected the proofs, and I read a chapter. Do you know it seemed to me very amusing?" —Dean Hole's "Memories."

Time and Money.

Whistler, on the witness stand one day, was asked the price he had obtained for a certain picture.

"One thousand guineas," said he. "How long did it take you to paint it?"

"About a day and a half."

"And do you mean to tell the court, Mr. Whistler, that you have the audacity to charge 1,000 guineas for the work of a day and a half?"

"No, sir; I ask it for the knowledge of a lifetime."

It Didn't Work.

"This'll be good for a hundred anyhow," said young Sow His Wild Oats to his pal. "Every young fellow needs a stake when he is of age, so I'll send this telegram collect to the old man:

"Dear Father—I am twenty-one today and broke."

An hour later the fond father wired collect:

"So was I when I was twenty-one."

His Suspensions Aroused.

Burns—So your new play was performed last night? Was there a call for the author? Plotter—There was no general demand for his appearance, but I heard one or two men say they'd like to see the man who wrote it. I didn't like the way they said it and got out of the house as soon as I could. —Boston Transcript.

Not to Be Fooled.

Dealer—Five pounds for this beautiful painting? Why, man, the frame is worth more than that. Connoisseur—Yes, but not with that picture in it. —London Tit-Bits.

The squalls on the sea of matrimony have never been so perilous as to deter a woman from taking the last boat out. —New York Herald.

It is a beauty. Dorothy Dodd shoes for women. C. B. HIGHLAND, x

HIS SHOW WAS OVER.

The Way an Entertainer Snubbed a Snobbish Patron.

An Englishwoman of decidedly snobbish instincts, but socially entrenched behind great and new riches, once engaged the late Corney Grain to give an entertainment at her country house. She left instructions that the entertainer when he arrived was to dine with the servants. The butler, who knew better, apologized, but Corney was a man not easily disconcerted, wrote Jerome K. Jerome. He dined well and after dinner rose and addressed the assembled company.

"Well, now, my good friends," said he, "if we have all finished and if you are all agreeable I shall be pleased to present to you my little show."

The servants cheered. The piano was dispensed with, and Corney contrived to amuse his audience very well for half an hour without it.

At 10 o'clock came down a message. Would Mr. Corney Grain kindly come up into the drawing room? Corney went. The company in the drawing room were waiting, seated.

"We are quite ready, Mr. Grain," remarked the hostess.

"Ready for what?" demanded Corney courteously.

"For your entertainment," answered the hostess.

"But I've given it already," explained Corney, "and my engagement was for one performance only."

"Given it! Where? When?"

"An hour ago—downstairs."

"But this is nonsense!" exclaimed the hostess.

"It seemed to me somewhat extraordinary," Corney replied, "but it has always been my privilege to dine with the company I am asked to entertain. I took it you had arranged a little treat for the servants."

THE STOOPING HABIT.

It Is One of the Things That Make Men Grow Old Quickly.

Dr. Madison J. Taylor, giving general advice to the aged in the Popular Science Monthly, says in effect that old people do not stoop because they are old, but they get old because they stoop.

The stiffening of the tissues, which is the sign and accompaniment of age, is warded off by exercise. Self indulgence in eating and drinking and in lazy ways is the sure road to senility. "I have often been surprised and gratified," writes the doctor, "to find that regulated movements of the neck and upper trunk muscles, employed for the purpose of accomplishing something else, resulted in a conspicuous improvement in hearing, in vision, in cerebation and, as a consequence, in a betterment in cerebral circulation, also in sleep."

"Persons who habitually maintain an erect position in standing or sitting are stronger than those who slouch. A person who stoops and allows the shoulders to sag down and forward and the ribs to fall back toward the spine shortens the anteroposterior diameter of the thorax anywhere from two to five inches. The lungs, heart, great vessels and other important structures in the thorax cannot live, move and have their proper being under such circumstances."

Wherefore the proper thing for persons who are not so young as once they were is to brace up, dress young and feel young. Sitting "lunched up" over a fire won't do.

Who It Was.

A well known New York clergyman was telling his Bible class the story of the prodigal son at a recent session, and, wishing to emphasize the disagreeable attitude of the elder brother on that occasion, he laid especial stress on this phase of the parable. After describing the rejoicing of the household over the return of the wayward son, he spoke of one who, in the midst of the festivities, failed to share in the jubilant spirit of the occasion.

"Can anybody in the class," he asked, "tell me who this was?"

A small boy, who had been listening sympathetically to the story, put up his hand.

"I know," he said beamingly; "it was the fatted calf." —Harper's Weekly.

Herbert Spencer Was Human.

Herbert Spencer in the attitude of superintending his household affairs was practical and amusing. At one time the poultryer had not been giving satisfaction, so Mr. Spencer called his housekeeper and gave her directions to transfer his custom to another tradesman whose shop faced the delinquent's. "And, Miss Smith," said the author of "Synthetic Philosophy," "be particular that the first poultryer sees you giving your orders to the second poultryer!"

The Charm of His Philosophy.

"He pretends to be a philosopher," "Yes; but I notice one peculiar thing about his philosophy."

"What's that?"

"It's only other people's hard luck that he is able to accept philosophically." —Chicago Post.

He Wasn't Afraid.

When Bishop Phillips Brooks was "commanded," as the phrase goes, to speak before the queen some one asked him if he was afraid. "No," he replied, smiling, "I have preached before my mother."

A Birthday Present.

Dick—She's real jolly, isn't she? Smiles all the time. Nick—Yes, but she can't help it; it's inherited. Her mother used to pose for a dentifice ad. —Detroit Free Press.

The basest and meanest of all human beings are generally the most forward to despise others. —Fielding.

You get the news in the Daily West Virginian.

A PLUCKY LIEUTENANT.

He Was Insubordinate, but He Saved His Vessel.

Reuben Pinkham, a native of Nantucket, made his first trip as third lieutenant on the ship Potomac, which crossed the north Pacific, a region little known to naval vessels in the early thirties. Pinkham had been on several whaling voyages, and was familiar with those waters. The author of "The Island of Nantucket" says that one day, near sunset, he had the watch, while the commodore was packing up and down the deck.

Suddenly Pinkham gave the order, "Man the weather braces!"

"What's that for?" asked the commodore.

"We shall have wind in a moment."

The commodore went to the lee rail and scanned the sea and sky. "I see no signs of wind," he returned. "Let the men leave the braces."

The crew dropped the ropes.

"Keep hold of the braces, every man of you!" called out Pinkham, and the men resumed their grasp. The commodore flushed with anger and exclaimed in peremptory tones:

"Let the men leave the braces!" and again the braces were dropped.

"Don't any of you dare to drop the ropes!" shouted Pinkham, shaking his trumpet at the crew, who once more took hold. Just then the wind dropped entirely; not a breath stirred.

"Taut, taut! Haul, all of you!" called Pinkham, and the ponderous yards swung to reversed position. The wind came out of the opposite quarter and struck the ship like a sledge hammer. The vessel staggered, shook the spray from her bows and dashed ahead. The commodore disappeared into his cabin without saying a word.

Presently he sent the first lieutenant to relieve Pinkham, requesting to see the latter immediately. When Pinkham entered the cabin the commodore said:

"I consider that I am indebted to you for all of our lives; but I will tell you frankly if that wind hadn't come I should have put you in irons in two minutes."

KOREAN CURIOSITIES.